

# A LEVEL LAW

## Should you consider taking it?

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Many aspiring law students, including myself, may have believed that to pursue law in university, one must have it as a subject in A levels as well. This assumption may quickly fade once the course begins. While it is true that the subject gives you a boost in terms of legal knowledge, the extent of its addition in giving you a boost on your university application is still up for debate.

First, it is important to understand that A level Law is more than just exciting cases of serial killers or mass murderers. While it does have its fair share of those mentioned, the syllabus mostly covers the legal framework of the justice system, from the court structure to the policy-making process. A level Law goes into the intricacies of what it takes to build up a country's legal administration. It is a theoretically taxing subject and requires long hours of dedicated study time along with immense patience.

It should also be taken into consideration the board under which you are taking up the course. For Cambridge, Law is the usual two-year course with four papers in total, but for Edexcel, it's linear, meaning that the course needs to be completed in one year with a total of two papers. To make matters worse, Edexcel also does not have a proper student book on the subject, and students need to rely on the Cambridge book, which lacks important topics from the former board's syllabus.

By now, you might be thinking that I am trying my best to make you turn away from law, but remember, good and bad go hand in hand. With proper interest in the subject, law can be easy to excel in. While the initial introduction of how law in the world actually works might be jarring, over time, it becomes an interesting course to bring your own two cents into.

Not just that, studying law at A level introduces you to the fundamental principles of law and can provide a solid base for further legal studies. This early exposure becomes irreplaceable, as it truly teaches you whether or not you want to pursue law in the near future and provides a rough estimation of what the workload for the subject is like.

Beyond understanding the exam format, it's important to grasp what the learning process entails as well. Although popular as a career worldwide, A level Law may not gain as much demand due to the taxing path that lies ahead. As such, the amount of support you may find might be limited as well. Due to its exclusivity, tuition fees for the subject are normally twice that of a conventional subject, and its specialised

nature requires not a normal teacher but one with legal expertise, aka a lawyer, to teach it.

A few years ago, it was common for aspiring law students to focus on basic subjects like science, humanities, and a supporting subject. Taking A Level Law was often frowned upon, with prestigious universities like Oxford preferring the more traditional combination of subjects. This was based on the belief that the simplified way A Level Law was taught clashed with the more rigorous teaching methods at universities, potentially stunting students' academic growth.

However, perceptions have shifted over time. Universities are beginning to recognise the value that A Level Law can offer when taught effectively. Now, many institutions are either welcoming or neutral toward it. So, if Law has sparked your interest, this might be the right time to pursue it.

Despite how it may seem, the article isn't to force you away from a path you are clearly interested in. It is simply to educate you on what you might be getting yourself into and to let you be the judge of your capabilities. It is imperative to approach this subject with utmost enthusiasm and not as a last option you picked because you ran out of all others.

A choice that stems from determination and confidence will help you sustain yourself in a subject that will demand so much from you within that one-year time span. As long as you've weighed your pros and cons and are ready to grind for the upcoming years, I'd say A level Law may be the right choice for you.

*Tarannum Khondkar is a struggling student and a contributor at The Daily Star.*

